



# News Release

## Arizona Department of Public Safety

2102 West Encanto Boulevard – Post Office Box 6638  
Phoenix, Arizona 85005-6638

Date: January 1, 2009

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Direct Inquiries to:

[pio@azdps.gov](mailto:pio@azdps.gov) or [CDemodica@azdot.gov](mailto:CDemodica@azdot.gov)

### **DPS & ADOT/MVD Directors Announce Reminder: Amendment to 28-2354 –License Plate Display Now in Effect**

Roger Vanderpool, director of the Arizona Department of Public Safety, and Stacey K. Stanton, director of the Arizona Department of Transportation/ Motor Vehicle Division (ADOT/MVD), want to remind the motoring public of an important change to the requirements for the attachment and display of the Arizona license plate that became effective on Jan. 1, 2009.

On Jan. 1, 2009, Arizona Revised Statute (A.R.S.) 28-2354, was amended to state that “a person shall maintain each license plate so it is clearly legible and so that the name of this state at the top of the license plate shall not be obscured.” The revision was added to the existing requirement for the proper attachment and legible display of the Arizona license plate.

An attachment that contains an ADOT/MVD graphic depicting a “good” and “bad” displayed Arizona license plate is contained within this News Release.

The actual Arizona law has been copied into this document and can also be retrieved using the Web link provided: [Note](#) -The revision to the existing law is underlined and in bold blue text.

#### **Arizona Revised Statute (A.R.S.) 28-2354. License plates; attachment**

A. A person shall display the license plate or plates as follows:

1. For a motor vehicle, motorcycle, trailer or semitrailer, on the rear.
2. For a vehicle for which two license plates are issued, the vehicle owner shall display either of the following:

- (a) One plate on the rear.
- (b) One plate on the front and one plate on the rear.

B. A person shall display all license plates as required by subsection A until their lawful use expires or is canceled or revoked. A person shall maintain each license plate so it is clearly legible and **so that the name of this state at the top of the license plate is not obscured.** A person shall securely fasten each license plate to the vehicle as follows:

1. To prevent the plate from swinging.
2. At a height of at least twelve inches from the ground to the bottom of the plate.
3. In a position to be clearly visible.

**Web Link:**

<http://www.azleg.state.az.us/FormatDocument.asp?inDoc=/ars/28/02354.htm&Title=28&DocType=ARS>

**Frequently asked questions to further explain A.R.S. 28-2354B:**

Does the change apply to out of state or foreign license plates?

No, the revision only applies to the display of Arizona license plates.

Can some of the word “Arizona” be covered and not be in violation?

No, the requirement is that the name of the state at the top of the license plate not be obscured.

Does this change help law enforcement?

The requirement to have the state name of “Arizona” clearly visible and not obscured provides several benefits. The most important benefit centers on citizens who witness a crime involving a motor vehicle or otherwise recognizes a license plate from a broadcast for an Amber Alert or other Attempt to Locate will better assist the witness to identify the “Arizona” and the characters on the plate.

Myth: Police Officers and Citizens should be able to recognize an Arizona Plate:

Please visit any ADOT/MVD area office or visit the Web site “[www.servicearizona.com](http://www.servicearizona.com)” to see the many versions of Arizona license plates that can be obtained and displayed. Many other states also have several variations and are their design may be similar to plates from other states, so it is a flawed assumption that there is one identifiable plate design that can be clearly associated with any one state.

What is the fine for anyone that is cited for violating this law?

The fines vary throughout the state according to the traffic court that has jurisdiction. The fines can range from \$110.00 to \$200.00 statewide, the average fine appears to be about \$136.00 throughout the Valley.

Is this a primary or secondary enforcement law?

The initial law has been in place for many years as a “Primary enforcement,” which means any law enforcement officer can make a traffic stop on the vehicle solely for violation of A.R.S. 28-2354B. Again, the one line revision to the existing statute **did not make the change a new law**. It additionally is classified as a civil sanction offense.

Was this change requested by the Arizona Department of Public Safety?

DPS was not a part of any legislative process that created this revision. Any questions reference the original intent or purpose of the revision will have to be directed to the creator of the legislation.

If I attached the license plate frame that covers the name Arizona before the revision went into effect, or it was placed on my vehicle by the dealership where it was purchased will that exempt my plate from the law?

The revision applies to proper display of all Arizona license plates, regardless when the license plate frame or holder that is in violation was affixed. There is no “Grandfather clause” or other exceptions.

DPS and ADOT/MVD are committed to providing information to the public on various Arizona rules, regulations and traffic laws to further insure the safety of all motorists who travel this great this state.

To obtain additional information please visit the below Web sites:

<http://www.azdps.gov>

<http://azdot.gov/mvd/>

# End #

**Correct Display: “Arizona” Clearly Visible and Not Obscured**



**Incorrect Display: “Arizona” Not Visible and Obscured**

